

# SSVF Priority 1 Community Plan

Date Completed/Revised:

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Month			Day			Year			

<b>Continuum of Care (CoC) Name: Nashville/Davidson County</b>		<b>CoC #: 504</b>
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<b>Person Completing this Plan:</b> Will Connelly		<b>Title:</b> Director, Metropolitan Homelessness Commission
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**1. Primary Planning and Coordination Group:** Identify the primary group responsible for planning and coordinating efforts to prevent and end homelessness among Veterans in the CoC. Identify the principal members of this group and their affiliation.

Primary Group Name: Nashville Homeless Veteran Service Coordination Team	
Principle Members	Affiliation
Daniel Heim	HCHV Program Manager, Tennessee Valley Health Services
Wanda Ridgeway	HUD-VASH Social Worker, Tennessee Valley Health Services
Cassandra Haley	HUD-VASH Social Worker, Tennessee Valley Health Services
Phyllis Viltz	SSVF Project Director, Centerstone
Bill Burleigh	Executive Director, Operation Stand Down TN
Suzie Tolmie	Homeless Coordinator (CoC), MDHA
Will Connelly	Director, Metropolitan Homelessness Commission
Renee Bobb	SSVF Grant Coordinator, Operation Stand Down TN
Troy Jenkins	SSVF Grant Coordinator, Centerstone
Amanda Wood	HMIS Systems Administrator, Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency
Jessica Tate	SSVF Priority One Grant Coordinator, Centerstone
Catherine Fearn	SSVF Program Manager, Centerstone
Karri Simpson	Project Manager, Metropolitan Homelessness Comm
Kayla Wilson	Director of Outreach Services, Park Center

**2. Ongoing Review and Coordination:** Briefly describe how often (e.g., monthly) the above group or a related review/coordination group meets to review Veterans who are homeless, track progress toward re-housing, and coordinate efforts. Include a summary of what information is reviewed during these meetings.

The planning group will meet once every two weeks beginning January 2015. We will review the following information: total # Veteran households experiencing homelessness each month, number of Veteran households exiting homelessness each month by type of assistance provided (TH, PSH, RRH, etc), length of stay in GPD and other transitional housing, decreasing program overlaps, support service coordination, improving referrals to other VA and non-VA resources, barriers to transitional and permanent housing, outreach and identification strategies (especially for unsheltered Veterans), data quality and reporting within HMIS, landlord outreach, permanent housing retention data, strategies to build community among veterans exiting homelessness, and SSVF integration into the ongoing development of the local coordinated assessment system.

**3. SSVF Grantees Serving CoC Geography:** Identify each SSVF funded agency serving Veterans in the CoC geography and each SSVF total grant award amount for FY15, including priority 1 ("surge"), 2 (renewals), and 3 (other new) awards. If one agency has multiple awards, list each separately. Pro-rate a grant award amount if the award covers more than one CoC geography. Include the projected annual number of households each grantee can serve and the total number of households across all grantees.

Grantee Agency Name	Grant Amount	Total Annual Projected Households	Total Annual Projected Households: Rapid Re-Housing	% of Total Households to be Assisted with Rapid Re-Housing
Centerstone of TN – Priority 2	550,000 (pro rated)	90	54	60%
Centerstone of TN – Priority 1	1,000,000	225	135	60%
Operation Stand Down of TN	625,770 (pro rated)	145	87	60%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,175,770</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>276</b>	

**4. Annual Demand and Need for Rapid Re-Housing Assistance:** Using the *Veterans Demand Analysis and Progress Tracking Tool* or other demand analysis data agreed to by the primary group above, identify:

- The most recent actual or projected annual unduplicated number of homeless Veterans (on street and/or who access emergency shelter, Safe Havens, or transitional housing, including GPD) in the CoC geography, by household type
- The number of those Veterans who will need rapid re-housing assistance to exit homelessness
- The number of Veterans needing rapid re-housing assistance who are projected to be eligible for SSVF RRH assistance.

	Annual Unduplicated Homeless Veteran Households	Estimated # of Needing RRH (a)	Projected # to be Assisted with SSVF RRH (b)	Projected # to be Assisted with Other RRH (c)	Gap (a-(b+c))
Households without Children	541	303	242	61	0
Households with Children	54	38	34	4	0
<b>Total Homeless Veteran Households</b>	<b>595</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>0</b>

**5. CoC Goals for Ending Homelessness Among Veterans:** List the CoC's goals for ending Veteran homelessness by the end of 2015 (fill in additional related goals the CoC has determined, if relevant).

**What are the CoC's goals for the estimated number of Veterans, including chronically homeless Veterans, who will be homeless as of the night of the January 2016 PIT Count?**

	All Homeless Veteran Households (including CH)			Chronically Homeless Veteran Households		
	Sheltered	Unsheltered	TOTAL	Sheltered	Unsheltered	TOTAL
Households without Children	107	0	107	35	0	35
Households with Children	35	0	35	11	0	11
<b>Total Households</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>46</b>

Has the CoC established other goals related to preventing and ending homelessness among Veterans by the end of 2015? ☒ Yes ☐ No

If “Yes”, please describe:

The main objective is to have adequate permanent housing opportunities available for Veterans who are experiencing homelessness at any given time: resources that not only exist but are also able to be accessed in a timely manner. Our system should perform at a high level so that our Veteran monthly housing placement average is greater than or equal to the total number of sheltered and unsheltered Veterans at any given time.

The Nashville/Davidson County CoC recently joined the national Zero: 2016 campaign, a rigorous follow-on to the 100,000 Homes Campaign. This new effort is designed to help our community “get to zero” Veterans experiencing homelessness by the end of 2015 through the following means: hands-on coaching from Community Solutions and other technical assistance providers, the implementation of transparent data and performance management strategies (for example, the regular use of the Veterans Gap Analysis Tool developed by the VA and Community Solutions, the *Veterans Demand Analysis and Progress Tracking Tool* and/or other available tools), and a shared learning environment that includes 68 other campaign communities (including Memphis, TN, and Chattanooga, TN).

A subcommittee of the CoC is leading the ongoing development of a coordinated assessment system that should improve how Veterans are connected to homelessness prevention and diversion programs as well as housing navigation and prioritization of services if homelessness cannot be avoided. A representative from SSVF is a member of that subcommittee.

**6. SSVF Integration into CoC Coordinated Assessment System:** Briefly describe how Veterans access SSVF assistance (across all SSVF grantees) via the CoC’s coordinated assessment system (e.g., “All Veterans who present to the CoC coordinated assessment center are screened for their current situation, needs, and SSVF eligibility. Then....). If not yet fully developed, describe your plans and implementation timeframe. Specifically address:

- a) How Veterans who present for shelter are screened and diverted to SSVF homelessness prevention assistance when they have somewhere safe and appropriate to stay that night.
- b) How Veterans who become literally homeless are screened and triaged to SSVF rapid re-housing assistance as soon as possible once it is clear the Veteran is unable to resolve their homelessness without assistance.

Nashville's coordinated assessment system is not fully developed. July 1, 2015, is the target date for broader implementation. A subcommittee of the CoC is leading the planning and implementation of the system, and SSVF staff, who is also a member of the Veteran Planning group, is working with the CoC subcommittee to ensure a seamless SSVF integration.

Staff at shelters and other frontline staff have been using a common assessment tool called the VI-SPDAT since February 2014 to identify and prioritize Veterans and non-Veterans for permanent housing. Staff that use the VI-SPDAT also complete a 2-hour "housing navigation" training that outlines processes to connect people experiencing homelessness to housing and support service resources. These efforts have led to more coordination, data sharing, and prioritization among providers. By March, 2015 homeless providers in Nashville will begin using a Homelink system to track data and provide for coordination of care across providers for homeless individuals/families, including Veterans. This system will increase our community's ability to provide more targeted assistance.

In addition, direct service staff from approximately a dozen organizations and agencies, including Veterans Administration HUD-VASH Social Workers, Centerstone SSVF and Operation Stand Down of TN staff, meet on a monthly basis to ensure that the pathway for Veterans from the street to housing is as coordinated and timely as possible. As a result of this increased communication, staff from Tennessee Valley Health Services, Operation Stand Down of TN, and Centerstone are seen as the "go-to" access points for prevention and re-housing assistance for Veterans. At Centerstone and Operation Stand Down of TN, Veterans can be referred or can self-refer for SSVF services. SSVF Services can be accessed via phone, web referral, or engagement by an outreach worker in the community. For GPD resources, Veterans are referred and screened at the local VA hospital and/or by VA outreach staff.

**7. Long-Term System Improvements:** Briefly describe how the CoC plans to utilize SSVF Priority 1 and all other SSVF funding over the next three years to foster long-term system improvements and optimization so that homelessness is prevented whenever possible and when it does occur, it is rare and brief. Specifically address areas for improvement related to:

- a) Further integrating SSVF assistance into the CoC's planning, oversight processes and coordinated assessment system.
- b) Ensuring comprehensive coordination with VA systems and other VA funded programs.
- c) Improving or establishing partnerships with community-based services and public/private housing providers.

Clear directives and practical tools from the Veterans Health Administration and Community Solutions are helping our entire homeless service system understand that the goal to end Veterans homelessness by December 2015 is being taken very seriously and will be accomplished via a coordinated and methodical manner. The increased focus, the critical “surge” of SSVF funding, and the attention from national campaigns like Zero: 2016 will help bring the CoC closer to Veterans programs (and vice versa).

Specifically, this planning group will focus on the following strategies to foster long-term system improvement:

- Meetings held every two weeks to track progress towards prevention, re-housing and coordination of efforts. Every meeting will have an agenda and a set of minutes, and participants will make efforts to maintain a sense of urgency and a willingness to collaborate in the name of ending Veterans homelessness for good. We will also try to have fun because this work is too difficult without it.
- There will be an increased focus on data collection and data analysis via HMIS and Homelink to help improve system optimization and performance. Special attention will be given to tracking homeless veterans.
- When implemented fully, Nashville’s coordinated assessment system will integrate with SSVF, HUD-VASH and GPD systems, as well as other non VA-funded programs designed to assist veterans. Efforts will be made to ensure that direct service staff from all community based agencies know how to connect Veterans to appropriate resources when engaged on the streets or in shelter, or otherwise identified.
- The Governance Committee of the CoC will help oversee the community’s efforts to end Veterans homelessness by adding reporting to its monthly agendas. The Metropolitan Homelessness Commission will also set aside time during its bi-monthly meetings to report on progress towards ending Veteran homelessness
- The planning group will utilize HUD-VASH, GPD, and SSVF resources, and also identify non-VA resources to assist Veterans who are not eligible for or refuse these services, or who need additional assistance to avoid or exit homelessness.

**8. Other Strengths and Challenges:** Briefly describe any additional strengths and/or challenges relevant to your achieving VA and local goals.

Additional challenges:

- Nashville is currently a very attractive place to live. The increased demand for housing has caused rental rates to increase rapidly and often puts affordable housing out of reach of many Veterans. High fair-market rental rates also make it more difficult to find landlords who will participate in the HUD-VASH and other subsidy programs.
- It is difficult to engage unsheltered Veterans consistently, especially Veterans who do not actively seek services from the VA, Operation Stand Down TN, Centerstone, and other service providers. These Veterans often have the most complicated needs and require extra supports to access SSVF and other VA programs. Additional funding for street outreach specialists would improve our community's ability to frequent meal programs, day shelters, and other "hot spots" more frequently.
- Our coordinated assessment system has not been implemented fully yet. Also, many providers only use HMIS to comply with the demands of funders and do not use it to its fullest capacity. Until coordinated assessment is implemented and HMIS is embraced, Veterans will not be screened, diverted, and triaged in the most efficient and effective manner.
- Coordination among agencies serving Veterans still needs improvement. A monthly "case conferencing" meeting to discuss vulnerable Veterans could help increase communication and coordination. The Veteran's Service Coordination Team is in the process of developing releases that will allow for case conferencing. Once releases are finalized and approved, this will begin.

Additional strengths:

- Local leadership at the VA believes that ending Veterans homelessness is achievable.
- Nashville's homeless service providers are a tight-knit community with longstanding relationships.
- The director of our local housing authority is a Veteran and the mayor's office is on board.
- VA's goal of ending veteran homelessness is aligned with the city's Zero: 2015 campaign.